Amchitka Island Activities UPDATE

Cleanup Activities Underway

Environmental Restoration Division

The remote island of Amchitka, Alaska, is currently serving as a temporary home to more than 90 workers from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the U.S. Navy, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The base camp, which at its maximum can hold up to 130 individuals, was established in early May 2001 to support cleanup activities on the island. The remediation is part of an overall effort to address environmental damage caused from previous U.S. Government occupations.
[Article continued on next page.]

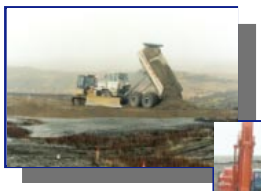
DOE Remediation Sites
Milrow site mud pit (1)
Long Shot site mud pits (3)
Cannikin site mud pits (3)
Drill site D mud pits (3)
Drill site E mud pits (1)
Drill site F mud (1)
Shallow groundwater monitoring wells (16)
Underground storage tanks (2)

Capping a Mud Pit

The mud pits on Amchitka Island were constructed to hold large quantities of drilling fluid used during nuclear testing activities conducted by the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission in the 1960s and 1970s. The U.S. Department of Energy is capping these pits to isolate the drilling mud from the environment and prevent future impacts.

Water is pumped off and treated

Standing water that accumulated in the mud pit from rain and snow is pumped off to provide access to the drilling mud. If necessary, the water is transferred through a water treatment system before being released into nearby water bodies. The water is treated to comply with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation discharge standards.



Drilling mud is stabilized

Once the surface water has been removed, soil and sand from another area on the island is brought to the mud pit and mixed with the drilling mud. This is done to create a stable surface.

A liner is placed to "cap" the pit

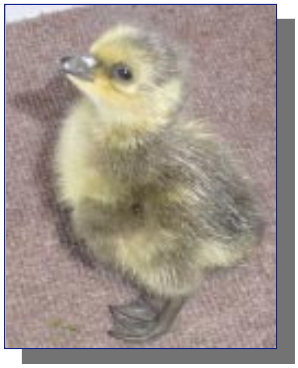
A geosynthetic liner is placed over the mixture of drilling mud and soil capping the pit and isolating the drilling mud from the surrounding environment. Additional soil is placed on top of the cap and graded to promote surface water runoff away from the capped mud pit.

The site is revegetated

Finally, a layer of topsoil is placed on the compacted material, and a mat with a native seed mix is placed over the entire area.

[Continued from front page]
Since May, the base camp has accommodated a wide range of personnel. Other government personnel include representatives from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). FWS biologists were on site to ensure the safety of the Aleutian Canada Goose, recently taken off the threatened species list. EPA scientists were conducting groundwater sampling as part of the Long- Term Hydrological Monitoring Program. Additional workers include medical and base camp support staff.

Despite an abundance of rain and three minor earthquakes, DOE remediation activities have remained on schedule. DOE workers have completed work at 11 of the 12 mud pits. The remaining pit to be capped is located at Drill Site D. The work is going well and native vegetation is already growing at the Cannikin site. Of the 24 groundwater monitoring wells, 16 have been closed. The remaining eight wells will remain open. The closing of the two underground storage tanks was completed in early August. All DOE and other agency work is expected to be complete by September 2001.



Gosling Part of Russian Exchange Program

Biologists from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and IT Corporation discovered four Aleutian Canada Goose eggs in an abandoned nest on Amchitka Island, Alaska. The biologists were on the island to ensure that goose populations were not affected by remediation activities being conducted by the U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Navy, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as part of an environmental restoration effort, when they discovered the nest. They determined that an eagle had killed the mother and quick action was needed to save the eggs.

The eggs were flown to a FWS facility in Seward, Alaska, for care. On July 6, one of the eggs hatched a 2.7-ounce (75-gram) gosling. The gosling, named St. Constantine (or Connie), thrived under FWS care. Unfortunately, the three remaining eggs from the clutch did not hatch. Connie joined 18 other Aleutian Canada Geese in Russia and is now part of a captive breeding exchange program.

The Aleutian Canada Goose (Branta canadensis leucopareia) is one of 11 currently recognized subspecies of Canada Goose. The geese migrate from breeding grounds in the Aleutian Islands through coastal areas of Washington and Oregon on their way to California where they spend the winter months. The introduction of arctic and red foxes to the Aleutian Islands years ago caused a decline in geese population. In 1967, the Aleutian Canada Goose was placed on the endangered species list as a result of its declining numbers. Efforts to reduce the fox population on several key islands were successful and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) was able to downlist the species from endangered to threatened in 1991. In April 2001, the Aleutian Canada Goose was officially delisted because of the successful recovery of the species and will be monitored by the FWS for five years.

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